

# Alaska State Legislature

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## Representative Justin Ruffridge District 7 - Kenai/Soldotna

### **HB 144 Version N Sponsor Statement**

We have heard from Alaskans about the burden they face when seeking prior approval, or prior authorization for medical treatment, procedures, or medication.

Healthcare industry stakeholders convened numerous meetings over the interim to craft a bill that would address prior authorization and work for patients, providers, regulators, and insurers alike. These meetings culminated in House Bill 144.

HB 144 requires a process for prior authorization that is easily understood by both healthcare providers and their patients. It establishes time frames for approvals, as well as directions that must be followed if the insurer does not receive sufficient information to make a determination or if an adverse determination is made. It also outlines specific communication requirements between the insurer and provider regarding the process and when any changes to the process may be implemented.

The bill encourages the use of electronic data transmission through the insurers' website or a portal to safeguard patients' information, providing efficiencies for both healthcare providers and insurers.

HB 144 provides direction on the length of time a prior authorization may be granted for a chronic condition and how the prior authorization will be renewed when appropriate. It also provides direction on how the insurer is to implement step therapy protocols for patients with Stage 4 advanced metastatic cancer that allow the patient an expedient way to receive the treatment or prescription drugs that they need as quickly as possible.

HB 144 establishes that the Director of the Division of Insurance shall include in the division's annual report an update on the program's use, including statistics on approval time frames and other key metrics. Finally, the bill provides the Director with the authority to monitor compliance and enforcement.